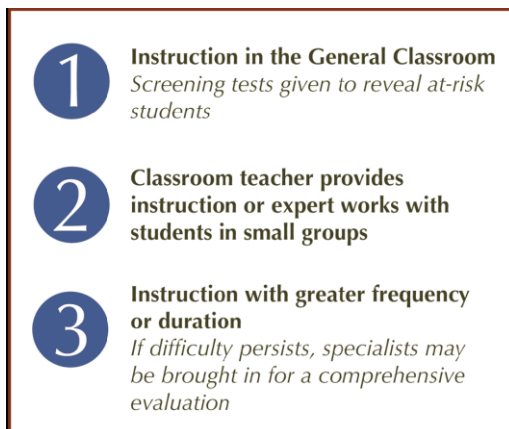




What is RTI? Response to Intervention (or Responsiveness to Intervention) (RTI) is an assessment and intervention process for systematically monitoring student progress and making decisions about the need for instructional modifications or increasingly intensified services using progress monitoring data. **RTI** is implemented in general education settings.

RTI provides the following information about a student:

- Indication of the student's skill level relative to peers or a criterion benchmark
- Success or lack of success of particular interventions
- Sense of the intensity of instructional supports that will be necessary for the student to achieve at a proficient level.



Think of **RTI** as a **series of tiers**. The **first tier** is instruction in the general classroom. Screening tests (e.g. formative assessments) given in the classroom show students at risk for reading and other learning difficulties. For example, testing may show that a student who has difficulty reading needs additional instruction in word fluency. In the **second tier**, the classroom teacher might handle the instruction. In other cases, someone who has expertise in reading and fluency might instruct the student and other students who have the same difficulty.

Students who fail to respond to this instruction may then be considered for more specialized instruction in **tier three**, where instruction may occur with greater frequency or duration. If the achievement difficulties persist, a team of educators from different fields (for example, reading or counseling) may complete a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services. All in all, the goal is to provide the type of instruction and educational assistance the student needs to be successful in the general education classroom.

What are the benefits of RTI? Although we need to know more, RTI has compelling benefits. When **RTI** is implemented with rigor and fidelity:

- All students receive high-quality instruction in their general education setting
- All students are screened for academics and behavior and have their progress monitored to pinpoint specific difficulties
- At-risk students do not have to wait before receiving additional instructional assistance, including special education if needed
- Critical information is provided about the instructional needs of the student, which can be used to create effective educational interventions
- Unnecessary testing that has little or no instructional relevance is limited
- All students receive appropriate instruction, particularly in reading, prior to placement in special education.

A continuing advantage for all students is the opportunity to be identified as “at risk” for learning difficulties early in their education instead of having to fail—sometimes for years—before getting additional services. And, all students have the opportunity to get assistance at the level needed, reducing the number of students referred for special education services.

There are valuable outcomes in schools and districts where **RTI** is being implemented in Title I schools with rigor and fidelity. For example, a study of the 3-year district-wide implementation of **RTI** in Arizona’s Vail Unified School District (grades 1-8) found these outcomes:

- Intervention was successful for about 95 to 98 percent of children screened
- Referrals to special education were reduced by more than half
- Percent of students identified as having “learning disabilities” went from 6 percent of all students to 3.5 percent
- Corresponding gains on state reading and math assessments

Source: VanDerHeyden, 2005 & 2006

The RTI Revolution

Currently more than 25 states have undertaken RTI initiatives. It has a variety of names at the local, district and state level:

Response to Intervention (some parts of CA, SC, FL)
Instructional Support Team (PA)
3 Tiers of Instruction (WA)
3 Tier reading model (TX, UT)
Ohio’s Integrated Systems Model OISM (OH)
ASPIRE (IL)

Problem Solving Model (MN, IA, MI)
Student Success Team (Long Beach, CA)
3 Tier RTI (AZ)
Multi-tiered model of support (KS)
Schoolwide RTI (MI)

Two states have mandated its use to identify students with learning disabilities (CO, FL).